



Attorney General Jon Bruning

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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Craig Johnson Convicted of First Degree Murder**

LINCOLN – Attorney General Jon Bruning today announced Craig Johnson, 48, was convicted in the 2011 murder of April Smith, 42, of Sidney. A jury found Johnson guilty on one count of first degree murder (Class IA felony), one count of use of a deadly weapon to commit a felony (Class II felony) and one count of possession of a deadly weapon by a felon (Class III felony) in Cheyenne County District Court. He faces a mandatory life sentence for the murder charge. Sentencing is scheduled for February 5, 2014.

“This man bound, strangled, beat and stabbed Ms. Smith to death,” said Bruning.  
“Today’s conviction ensures he is held accountable for this horrible crime.”

Authorities found April Smith’s body on her living room floor with her hands and legs bound. An autopsy established Smith died from an abdominal stab wound and she had suffered a blow to the head and strangulation. Bruises and lacerations were also found on her face and body.

Police apprehended Johnson on December 15, 2011, in Jackson, Michigan, traveling in Smith’s vehicle. He was later extradited to Nebraska.

Assistant Attorneys General Corey O’Brien and George Welch are handling the case with the assistance of Cheyenne County Attorney Paul Schaub.

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